

No hat-trick for honest Atkins!

By MICHAEL KNOX Wycombe Wand 3, Woking 1

HUNDREDS of fans left Loakes Park on Saturday convinced they had just seen Stewart Atkins complete his second hat-trick of the season, in the convincing league victory over Woking.

But the honest Atkins admitted after the match that he had not scored Wycombe's third and final goal. "I stuck my foot out but the ball went into the net off a defender for an own goal," he explained.

That unfortunate defender was young left back Tony Martin, who deflected Howard Kennedy's powerful drive past his own goalkeeper.

However, that cannot take anything away from Wycombe's excellent performance. They created at least a dozen good chances and the only pity was that they could

not convert more of them into goals. Atkins, apart, Wanderers made some astonishing misses but the important thing was that they were creating the goalscoring positions.

One change

Blues made one change from the side that drew 2-2 at Hayes on Wednesday. Steve Hardwick was unavailable because of a family illness, which meant that Les Reed came into mid-field for his most effective game of the season, and Paul Birdseye returned to his best position at full-back.

As if encouraged by that dramatic come-back at Hayes, Wycombe moved immediately into top gear and took the lead after seven minutes. Birdseye was fouled

as he attempted a long throw-in and Blues were awarded a free-kick in the right hand corner.

Holfeld curled the ball in, Alan Phillips won it in the air, the Woking defence failed to clear and Atkins completed the job from about three yards out.

Woking, the early season pacesetters, barely got out of their own half in the first 15 minutes, and when they did, Wycombe retaliated in superb fashion with a hectic 10 minute bombardment which could have produced four goals but brought only one.

Steve Long, playing at the top of his form, forced a fine save from goalkeeper Frank Parsons with a well placed back-header and then saw another shot blocked on the line.

But the most amazing miss of the lot came in the 26th minute, when Howard Kennedy hit the inside of a post with the goalkeeper lying injured out of his goal.

Pressure

This pressure did eventually bring its reward, however, in the 31st minute. Terry Scott, who sent over a stream of fine corners all afternoon, curled this one into the near post. It was flicked on to Atkins, who headed in, once again from close range.

Woking rallied in the dying moments of the half and Mick Preston sent a dangerous pass across the face of the goal with the home defence in all sorts of trouble. But the ball was touched for a corner.

Wycombe soon regained the initiative after the break and but for two remarkable misses would have sewn up the game there and then. First Scott scooped the ball over the bar from three yards out and then after Scott's next shot had hit the goalkeeper's feet, Kennedy did exactly the same thing.

Parsons, who looked shaky at times, was kept on his toes, but there was nothing he could do about the own goal that increased Wycombe's lead in the 64th minute. Kennedy shot from outside the area and Martin's deflection left the goalkeeper helplessly out of position.

Wanderers seemed set to pick up their third scoring bonus of the season for a three goal lead. But they relaxed and let one in at the other end. It came, need it be said, from a corner.

Former Loakes Park favourite Dave Alexander curled it in to John Love, who headed goalwards only to see Kennedy palm the ball off the line. But to his eternal credit referee Mr Maber, who enjoyed an excellent game, played the advantage law. The ball went to Preston who forced it over the line.

WYCOMBE: P. Spittle; P. Birdseye, R. Davies, J. Phillips, L. Reed, S. Atkins, M. Holfeld, S. Long (sub: D. Evans 76 mins), H. Kennedy, T. Scott.
WOKING: F. Parsons; D. Verby, T. Martin, J. Love, M. Preston, R. Steer (sub: E. James 52 mins), D. Alexander, T. Field, A. Morton, S. Cosham, J. Pitcher.
Referee: T. Maber (Ruislip Manor).
Audience: 3,000.
Half-time: 3-0. Scorer: Wycombe — Atkins (3 mins, 31 mins), Martin O.g. (64); Woking — Preston (67 mins).

BERGER Isthmian League Premier Division						
	P	W	D	L	F	Pts
Slough	32	17	7	8	40	33
Barking	27	16	8	3	57	35
Enfield	27	17	4	6	51	27
Walthamstow	27	14	5	8	44	25
Dulwich	29	14	9	6	50	27
Hendon	33	13	11	9	42	37
Wycombe	29	14	7	8	43	27
Croydon	27	13	6	8	38	23
Wandsworth	27	13	5	9	35	27
Boreham Wd	33	12	8	13	43	50
Woking	28	12	7	9	54	42
Oxford	32	12	6	14	41	56
Tooting	30	11	8	11	40	39
Harrow	30	10	8	12	41	36
Sutton	30	10	5	14	45	38
Walthamstow	30	11	5	14	45	39
Tilbury	31	10	7	14	44	61
Carshalton	29	7	10	12	37	49
Hayes	32	9	11	10	41	32
Staines	29	6	11	13	30	47
Kingston	34	3	11	20	26	54
Leytonstone	29	2	5	22	21	61
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